

## Kenai Refuge open house events

*by Candace Ward*

The Kenai National Wildlife Refuge will host its annual Open House on Saturday, September 30 from 11 - 3:00 p.m. This year's theme, Wild About Wilderness, celebrates the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of 1.35 million acres of designated wilderness on Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. Exhibits and programs will illustrate how the Refuge wilderness lands benefit the people and wildlife of the Kenai Peninsula.

### **Time Specific Events include:**

**BBQ Lunch at noon** - Come enjoy hot dogs, beans, and salad. Meet refuge staff, volunteers, and friends. Meet our Refuge Manager Robin West, new Assistant Manager Jim Hall, and volunteer coordinator Amy George. The lunch is organized courtesy of Refuge administrative staff - Pam Ables, Sandy Groth, Karen McGahan, and Brenda Wise.

**Visit with live raptors from the Anchorage Bird Treatment & Learning Center at 11:00-2:00 p.m.** Our bird guests will be a golden eagle and peregrine falcon.

### **All Day Events - 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.:**

**Kid's Activities** - Go on a wilderness scavenger hunt and win fun prizes! Hosted by Ranger Michelle Ostrowski and conservation associates Carlie Henne-man and Stephanie Smith.

**Meet the Kenai National Wildlife Friends Group and learn about their upcoming community events.** Find out about their new Sponsor-A-Refuge Wildlife Species Program.

**Andrew Berg Cabin** - See the historic cabin that community volunteers and Refuge staff relocated from Tustumena Lake in the Andy Simons Wilderness Unit

to the Refuge Visitor Center. Backcountry Ranger Gary Titus will host the cabin site and share updates on the project.

**Wilderness: Penthouse for Fish** - Come take a mysterious peek at the underwater world of fish. Find out how fish benefit from wilderness. Hosted by biologist Mary Price.

**Wilderness Benefits Wildlife** - See how wilderness helps brown bears, wolves, lynx, trumpeter swans, caribou, Dall sheep, and mountain goats. Hosted by biologists Sue Schulmeister and Rick Ernst.

**Fire in Wilderness** - Learn how wild fire is managed in Refuge wilderness. Hosted by Fire Management Officer Doug Newbould and fire management staff.

**Wilderness Benefits the Kenai Peninsula** - Discover how wilderness contributes to the quality of life for Kenai Peninsula residents and what we can do to protect and preserve wilderness. Hosted by Rangers Candace Ward, Rick Johnston, and Bill Kent.

**Wilderness Travel** - Learn to travel in Refuge wilderness safely and legally using your feet, horses, and canoes. See how to organize a survival kit and use outdoor gear. Hosted by refuge staffers Mark Wegner, Dave Kenagy, Greg George, and Chris Johnson.

All events take place at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center on Ski Hill Rd., one mile south of Soldotna. If you have questions, please call 262-7021.

*Candace Ward has been a park ranger at the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge for more than 15 years. She coordinates Refuge visitor service and education programs. Previous Refuge Notebook columns can be viewed on the Web at <http://kenai.fws.gov>.*